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# Military Portfolio Assessment

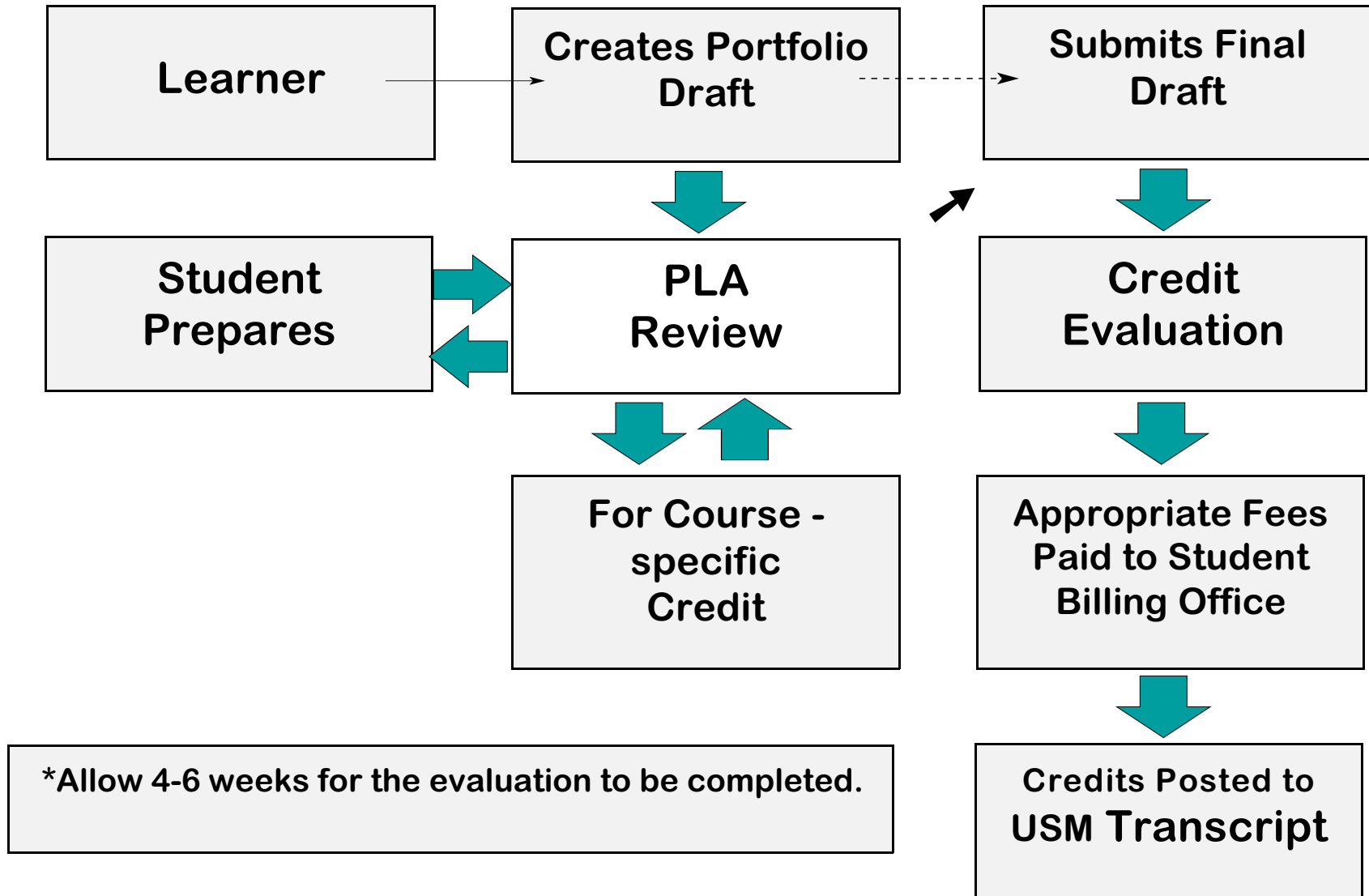
The following pages describe the required content areas of a learning portfolio. Portfolios are presented for course-equivalency credits.

**Students considering the portfolio process:** First read through the portfolio instructions, putting together pertinent information, but not completing the portfolio. Then call the above listed phone number or contact the following advisor by e-mail for an appointment.

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# USM Portfolio Assessment Process



# Portfolio Contents

An individualized learning portfolio for the military is prepared and presented for the purpose of evaluation so that the undergraduate student might earn course-equivalency credits toward a degree. For a portfolio to be accepted for credit assessment, it must include the following components and it must address the following issues:

- 1 A TITLE SHEET.** Two copies of the title sheet should be provided. Include name, home address, phone number, and e-mail address, if you have one. This page provides the evaluator of your portfolio with the information necessary to contact you directly, should that prove necessary.
- 2 The TABLE OF CONTENTS.** This page should reference all subsequent sections of your portfolio by page number.
- 3 A CURRENT RÉSUMÉ.** A one or two-page résumé contains a brief summary of your educational background and your work history. The résumé should also include memberships in associations, awards, or commendations.
- 4 An UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT.** Submit an unofficial USM transcript if you have one, as well as transcripts from other institutions attended.
- 5 A PERSONAL STATEMENT.** This is an autobiographical statement concerning your career/employment development or a similar review of your background. This is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the portfolio evaluator(s) and to explain the context in which you acquired the learning outcomes for which you are seeking college credit. You should highlight the key events and learning situations upon which your portfolio is focused.
- 6 COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES.** The primary focus or heart of your presentation is the learning outcome. This section will most directly influence the credit you will be awarded. The competencies constitute the most challenging part of your portfolio to write. This section deals with the learning outcomes together with documentation of your experiences. It must be consistent and compatible with your documentation. All competencies need to be supported by referring to a specific document by number or identification within the body of the competencies and learning outcome section. No matter how strong your documentation, you will need an equally strong and compelling narrative to place your experience in context and to demonstrate its academic merit.

The length of this section may vary from 5-15 pages, depending on the types and number of credits involved. Factors which might affect the length of this section are: subject area, quantity and type of documentation, and theoretical complexity of your knowledge. You should provide detail to develop a strong case for receiving the maximum number of credits.

The competencies should reflect natural, logical, and expected outcomes of your experiences. *A successful narrative which is awarded maximum credit describes the learning competencies as follows:*

- Relates your experiences to identifiable learning competencies and, if appropriate, to specific course expectations.
- Describes your knowledge of the subject.
- Specifies when, where and how you acquired the knowledge.
- Introduces each learning competency or topic, and includes, where appropriate, documentation relating the competency to the course for which you wish to receive equivalency credits.
- Clearly elaborates upon these relationships between your documentation and each of the learning competencies you identify.

*To process knowledge, one must know how to:*

- Analyze its components,
- Associate new information with stored facts,
- Distinguish crucial information from the trivial,
- Integrate information from many sources to solve problems,
- Gain new awareness, and
- Be able to reflect on the applicability of learning to our world and ourselves.

*Three key cognitive skills related to learning competencies are:*

- ① The ability to see connections in diverse information and the ability to organize and communicate these relationships.

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- ② The ability to conceptualize the many sides of a controversial issue, to be able to see things conceptually, and to understand both the underlying issue as well as the different perspectives, enabling you to better resolve informational conflict.
- ③ The ability to actually learn from the experience. You should be able to generate behavioral alternatives and analyze a particular behavior in the context of another's behavior. An essential ingredient in the evaluation of competency is to determine the complexity or multi-dimensionality of intellect.

*Key criteria to consider are:*

- ability to state and explain specific information
- facility for recognition of meaning in performance and behavior
- interpretation of data, principles, or standards in the process of problem-solving
- ability to combine principles, theoretical concepts, and practical applications
- synthesizing situations and data for use in new decision-making areas
- understanding and evaluating multifaceted components of a total situation
- interpreting, analyzing, and transferring knowledge, skills, and aspects of personal attributes into leadership roles. \_\_\_\_\_

Several personal qualities which are generally more subtly present among the competencies can also indicate measurable abilities. They include but are not limited to the following:

- judgment/discrimination among options
- leadership abilities
- motivation
- empathy
- problem-solving abilities
- organizational skills
- teaching/facilitation skills
- role-modeling for new learning
- interpersonal communication
- personal and professional maturity

The Prior Learning Assessment Office encourages students to submit a rough draft of the Personal Statement and Learning Competencies so that feedback can be provided and useful comments can be made prior to a final submission.

**Documentation**, the material you submit to prove your claim of college-level learning, is the foundation of the portfolio. The documentation must be specifically identified within the appropriate competencies and learning outcomes. Effective documentation does the following:

- provides direct evidence of your knowledge
- pertains specifically to the Learning Competencies
- supports your narrative describing your learning outcomes

In most cases, you will need to supply both types of documentation, direct and indirect, to support your learning claims. Documentation may include written evidence, audio or video cassettes, CD's or DVD's, or photographs. You should provide enough documentation to demonstrate your understanding of the subject/competencies as outlined but do not include extraneous information.

Documentation can include, but is not limited to:

- job descriptions
- awards and/or certificates
- letters, references or job verification
- personnel evaluations
- evidence of promotion
- evidence of adopted suggestions
- licenses granted by state or national agencies
- membership requirements for professional trade organizations
- scores on licensing exams
- newspaper or magazine clippings relating specifically to you or your company
- documentation verifying that you completed a course/workshop, etc.
- diplomas for previous degrees
- audio or video cassette, CD or DVD of oral presentation, instructional demonstration, dance or other artistic performance.
- examples of written work

**7** **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.** At the conclusion of your portfolio, include a list and brief description of all books, articles or pamphlets that you referred to. This list will strengthen the theoretical foundation of your learning and make your presentation more compelling.

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# LEARNING ASSESSMENT WORK SHEET

## Competencies and Learning Outcomes

<b>Experience</b> (In what learning situations have I been involved?)	<b>Tasks/Duties Involved in Each Experience</b> (What responsibilities did I have in each of the experiences listed in Column 1?)	<b>Learning Outcomes/Competencies</b> (What <i>knowledge</i> was required to perform the experiences listed in Column 2?)	<b>Documentation</b> (What evidence do I provide to support knowledge shown in Column 3?)
<b>Employment</b> 1. 2. 3. 4.	1. a. b. c. d.  Etc.	Task 1 a. 1 b. 1 c.  Etc.	
<b>Non-credit Education</b>			
<b>Licenses, Awards, Certifications</b>			
<b>Volunteer Experience</b>			
<b>Recreation &amp; Hobbies</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

# COMPETENCE-BASED PORTFOLIOS

Evaluators use a competence-based method to determine portfolio credit awards. Competencies are personal characteristics or knowledge that an individual may develop through life experiences. Students are expected to demonstrate and verify these competencies/ learning outcomes in academic disciplines in order to earn academic credit. It is the **context** in which the competency is used rather than the competency itself which creates college credit. The following list may help you identify various competencies.

## Communication

(effectively listening, sending, and responding to messages in a variety of audiences)

- Speak** - effectively articulate your thoughts orally
- Write** - form clear and concise written thoughts
- Listen** - hear with thoughtful and objective attention, listen actively, paraphrase

## Critical Thinking

(effectively analyzing problems, ideas, and situations)

- Make Decisions** - arrive at solutions that end uncertainty and dispute
- Problem Solve** - develop solutions
- Think Critically** - think outside the box, use your mind to theorize, analyze, intend, reflect, reconsider, and remember
- Thinking Forward** - anticipate, assess needs
- Reason** - form conclusions, inferences or judgments
- Identify Issues** - apply criteria, analyze and interpret

## Management and Administration

(effectively managing, handling, and directing places, units, events and/or situations)

- Lead** - effectively oversee and direct people
- Motivate** - inspire others
- Delegate** - identify and select people for tasks
- Budget** - allocate assets
- Conduct Meetings** - lead, negotiate and mediate
- Present** - Consider learning styles ; use various media

## Research and Investigation

(effectively seeking out and utilizing information)

- Identify**- problems, needs, and solutions
- Design Experiments** - test and validate data
- Use Technology** - know and use a variety of appropriate resources
- Evaluate** - develop questionnaires and models

## Information Management

- Synthesize** - organize facts, concepts, and principles
- Catalog** - compile, rank and itemize information
- Manipulate Information** - evaluate against appropriate standards
- E- Knowledge** - understand and implement electronic and computer-related ideas
- Sort** - data and objectives

## Flexibility and Creativity

(effectively producing innovative ideas, design, and methods for new and/or existing situations, events, and procedures as well as artistic expression)

- Create** - be original and expressive
- Innovate** - solve problems in unique ways
- Adapt** - accommodate multiple demands and see alternative courses of action
- Conceptualize** - derive ideas from inferences

## Planning and Organization

(effectively managing time, energy and resources)

- Visualize** - predict future trends and patterns
- Initiate** - implement projects and ideas
- Schedule** - set and reach goals
- Prioritize** - arrange according to importance
- Account for and Assess** - evaluate plans or decisions, and follow through
- Dimensional Insight** - illustrate, display, and create

## Interpersonal/Human Relations

(effectively interacting with others)

- Network** - develop interactions with peers, supervisors and subordinates
- Be a Team Player** - encourage and appreciate contributions of others
- Use Diplomacy** - negotiate without arousing hostility as you deal with others

## Personal Development

- Motivated** - go beyond the expected
- Committed** - decide for the common good
- Independent** - work without guidance
- Confident** - have a positive personal attitude
- Energetic** - display enthusiasm
- Knowledgeable** - proficient in a field of study \*\*

# ACTION VERBS TO USE IN YOUR PORTFOLIO

## MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY

administered  
analyzed  
assigned  
attained  
chaired  
consolidated  
contracted  
coordinated  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
evaluated  
executed  
improved  
increased  
organized  
oversaw  
planned  
prioritized  
produced  
recommended  
reviewed  
scheduled  
strengthened  
supervised  
assembled  
built  
calculated  
computed  
designed  
devised  
engineered  
fabricated  
maintained  
operated  
overhauled  
programmed  
remodeled  
repaired  
solved  
upgraded

## COMMUNICATION

addressed  
arbitrated  
arranged  
authored  
collaborated  
convinced  
corresponded  
developed  
directed  
drafted  
edited  
enlisted  
formulated

influenced  
interpreted  
lectured  
mediated  
moderated  
negotiated  
persuaded  
promoted  
reconciled  
recruited  
spoke  
translated  
wrote

## RESEARCH

clarified  
collected  
critiqued  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
extracted  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
Investigated  
organized  
reviewed  
summarized  
surveyed  
systematized

## TEACHING

adapted  
advised  
clarified  
coached  
communicated  
coordinated  
demystified  
developed  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
guided  
informed  
instructed  
persuaded  
set goals  
stimulated  
trained

## FINANCE

administered  
allocated  
analyzed  
appraised  
audited  
balanced  
budgeted  
calculated  
computed  
developed  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
planned  
projected  
researched  
conceptualized  
created  
customized  
designed  
developed  
directed  
established  
fashioned  
founded  
illustrated  
initiated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
performed  
planned  
revitalized  
shaped

## LEADERSHIP

assessed  
assisted  
clarified  
coached  
counseled  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
educated  
expedited  
familiarized  
guided  
motivated  
referred  
rehabilitated  
represented

## CREATIVITY

created  
conceptualized  
customized  
designed  
developed  
directed  
established  
fashioned  
founded  
illustrated  
initiated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
originated  
performed  
planned  
revitalized  
shaped

## DETAIL

approved  
arranged  
catalogued  
classified  
collected  
compiled  
dispatched  
executed  
generated  
implemented  
inspected  
monitored  
operated  
organized  
prepared  
processed  
purchased  
recorded  
retrieved  
screened  
specified  
systematized  
tabulated  
validated

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

achieved  
expanded  
Improved  
pioneered  
reduced (losses)  
resolved (problems)  
restored  
transformed

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OR CRITERIA OF PORTFOLIOS

In order to construct a learning portfolio which would warrant evaluation, the student must demonstrate good organizational skills, good writing skills (including a solid background in grammar and vocabulary), the ability to reflect on personal strengths and expertise, and the skill to articulate these effectively. Students are expected to have completed ENG100C or its equivalent before beginning the portfolio assessment process.

The overall characteristics imbedded in the finished presentation are: directness, authenticity, breadth, and quality. They are interdependent, yet separate aspects of the presentation.

### 1. Directness

A copy of an article or document the student has written is direct evidence of writing ability.

A letter from the student's employer stating that he/she has written several documents and reports is indirect evidence. In general, direct evidence is preferable to indirect evidence. Audio and video cassettes, CD's and DVD's are helpful in documenting directness for many learning competencies. These criteria can be met in large part through the amount of detail used in explaining the competencies and areas of learning.

Often, the portfolio includes products for evaluation consideration. Direct examples of a student's previous work (drawings, photographs, articles or other documents) should be placed in the DOCUMENTATION section of the portfolio and referenced to the appropriate learning outcome.

### 2. Authenticity

A product submitted by a student in a portfolio (photographs, technical or blueprint drawings, article or other documents, audio/video cassette or CD/DVD, etc. produced by the student) is authentic if it is the student's own work. If the student has only secondary or minor involvement and responsibility for an activity/process/outcome, yet claims to have been more fully responsible, then the presentation lacks authenticity.

In some cases the student genuinely may not realize the role played by others in creating the product, or in accomplishing a set of tasks. The student may try to fraudulently represent another's work or accomplishments as his/her own. Suitable questioning in an interview would be one way to reveal the student's actual role. If authenticity is seriously questioned, it is possible that the portfolio evaluation process would be discontinued.

### 3. Breadth and Depth

Whereas a superficial, introductory-level background of learning is not credit-worthy, complex learning over a sustained and substantial period of time may qualify.

**Remember: quantity does not equal quality.**

For example, a student has worked for a company for 10 years – does the student have one year of learning experience repeated 10 times, or 10 years of learning experience that demonstrate growth, advancement, and progress in expertise and level of difficulty? The portfolio should be an illustration of vertical growth rather than horizontal development.

This evaluation criterion concerns the question of whether or not the learning is truly college-level. Oftentimes a student may learn something of personal value and benefit, but that learning may not be sufficient in scope, range, detail, complexity or general content to be valid for academic credit consideration.

In the written competency section of the presentation the student must be able to provide significant examples of actual step-by-step decision-making processes in which intellectual creativity and critical thinking abilities have been used in a significant manner.

#### **4. Quality**

Quality is demonstrated through two major forms:

1. quality of the written presentation itself, and
2. the quality of the work performed along with the competencies and college-level learning acquired in terms of complexity, difficulty, and level of professionalism.

The portfolio must be written using standard college-level English. A presentation with grammatical errors, poor vocabulary, or unclear, ambiguous, confusing wording will not be accepted.

The quality of the learning is exemplified in many ways. What evidence of learning outcomes is presented? What skill and factual knowledge are necessary to process relevant information? How is one's knowledge transferrable in order to deal with the practical problems in one's job?

#### **APPROVAL**

Students must receive advanced written approval from the academic department before pursuing a course equivalency through the portfolio process. Students pursuing ITT 400 credit should receive approval from their departmental advisor.

#### **EVALUATION**

For course equivalency evaluations, the standard for quality is the same as that shown by a student passing the course.

#### **PRESENTATION INFORMATION**

Major sections of the portfolio should be separated by tabbed inserts. In order to enable the evaluator to provide you with feedback, please do not put the résumé, personal statement or learning competency sections in plastic. You may use plastic for the documentation section, especially if you are using original certificates, letters or similar information which you want to protect.

\*\* From page 8, based on "Career Services and Professional Life Development Transferable Skills", USM and the work of Alverno College, Wisconsin.